



RCSA IN FOCUS

PROMOTING EQUITABLE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN A DEMOCRATIC SOUTHERN AFRICA

4th QUARTER 2005

IN FOCUS

by Gerry Cashion, RCSA Mission Director



Greetings and Happy 2006. With Secretary Rice's announcement of transformational diplomacy, revised State Department deployment criteria, and the nomination of Randy Tobias as the next USAID Administrator, change is in the air. Many USAID managers have concluded that a

Deputy Secretary with responsibility for coordinating all non-military foreign assistance is a good thing.

I have given this some thought and tend to agree with that conclusion, but as always the proof of the pudding will be how the new policies are implemented. I do believe that Secretary Rice is bringing both logic and common sense to her job, along with the considerable intellectual power that she possesses. Let us all wish her well in her effort to bring change to the Department of State and USAID – because the stakes are high.

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ON THE MOVE

The RCSA, and USAID, said farewell to Mission Director Gerry Cashion. After 28 years with the Agency and more than 20 years in Africa, Gerry retired in January.

Gerry's first African sojourn was as a Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone. He began his USAID career in 1978 as an anthropologist in Mali. Other USAID assignments took Gerry to Nigeria, Barbados, Morocco, and Kenya. At USAID/Washington, Gerry served in the Office of East Africa Affairs and the Africa Bureau Office of Development Planning. Gerry joined the RCSA in 2004.



The RCSA choir bids farewell to Mission Director, Gerry Cashion.

Of Gerry's career, one USAID Mission Director colleague stated that "few people in our ranks can rival the understanding and experience [Gerry] gained in [his] years of fine development work in Africa." His academic training as an anthropologist was reflected in his passion to understand what is important in the lives of the people of Africa. Gerry knew that understanding must precede action if we are to have sustainable development results. His wisdom is grounded in disciplined training, thoughtful observations and testing to see what really works.

Around the RCSA offices, Gerry's warm presence will be missed. He is a true extrovert who went to lengths to reach out to all RCSA employees. As one person noted at his farewell party, "the man can make you smile."



Representatives from LSU, RCSA, Stellenbosch University and others at the PFID signing ceremony

In support of the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa, South Africa's Stellenbosch University and the Louisiana State University (LSU) Agricultural Center signed agreements in September to improve quality control and marketing of meat, seafood and poultry in Southern Africa. These agreements are part of the **Partnerships for Food Industry Development (PFID)** project, supported by the RCSA and the USAID/Washington Africa Bureau. RCSA funds, combined with the resources of Stellenbosch University and LSU, will be used to establish a Technology Center focused on food safety, value-added processing and market linkages.

The Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), announced by President Bush in August 2002, seeks to reduce hunger in Africa by half by 2015.

For more information about PFID, contact [Jerry Brown](#) or [Cecilia Khupe](#).

The **RCSA Integrated River Basin Management Project (IRBM)** launched its website during the 4th quarter. The IRBM project supports the Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM) with environmentally sound planning and development in the basin. The Okavango Basin is shared by Angola, Botswana and Namibia. Project publications including the most recent OKACOM newsletter can be accessed at www.irbm.co.bw.

Malawi's Minister of Mines, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs launched a training workshop on "**Environmental Assessment and Environmentally Sound Design for Small-Scale Activities**" in October. The five-day workshop was sponsored by the USAID Africa Bureau. RCSA's Regional Environmental Advisor Camilien Saint-Cyr participated in the workshop as a facilitator and trainer.



Participants in Malawi training on Environmental Assessment and Environmentally Sound Design for Small-Scale Activities

In his remarks, Minister Chimunthu Banda stated that environmental degradation hinders economic growth in Malawi and emphasized the importance of compliance with measures designed to reduce environmental impacts.

The workshop brought together non-governmental organizations and Malawi government officials.

The Workshop promoted the incorporation of sound environmental management principles into the design and implementation of activities sponsored by USAID. For more information about environmental training, contact [Camilien Saint-Cyr](#).

FOCUS ON: Exporting Namibian Grapes

With assistance from the RCSA, Namibia moved one step closer to entering the U.S. table grape market. Working alongside Namibia's Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, RCSA Pest Risk Assessment Advisor Ann Ferguson reached agreement in December 2005 with the Namibian government and the grape industry on methods to mitigate the risk of pests.



L to R: RCSA Pest Risk Advisor Ann Ferguson with Ken Nagata, APHIS Advisor and George Rhodes, Namibian Ministry of Agriculture

The next step for Namibia's grape growers who wish to supply the U.S. market is the "rulemaking phase". The U.S. Department of Agriculture must now develop the rules under which Namibian grapes may be exported to the U.S. It is hoped that exports can begin this October, the beginning of the 2006 Namibia harvest season. This would be the culmination of an eight-year process. Namibia would export grapes to the U.S. under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)

which is meant to assist African exporters to enter the U.S. market.

Namibian grapes potentially enjoy a unique market niche as they are harvested after Californian grapes, but before the Chilean harvest. The Namibian grape industry employs over 5,000 persons seasonally, mostly from the historically disadvantaged northern part of the country. In the north, unemployment exceeds 30% and 1 in 5 persons are infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. Exports of grapes to the U.S. will create employment and support livelihoods for tens of thousands of Namibians.

Sharing River Basins

The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) was established in 1994 by Angola, Botswana and Namibia to promote coordinated and environmentally acceptable water resources management for the Okavango River Basin while addressing the social and economic needs of the riparian states. RCSA's Okavango Integrated River Basin Management Project (IRBM) is assisting OKACOM to establish a Permanent Secretariat while providing secretariat services in the interim. The Permanent Secretariat will be established in Maun, Botswana as an intergovernmental institution with the legal capacity and mandate to assist OKACOM to implement its decisions.

In early November OKACOM held their 11th Meeting in Windhoek, Namibia to address several issues important to the well-being of the people and resources in the basin. RCSA support was instrumental in organizing and coordinating the meeting which included the Department of Water Affairs in Namibia. OKACOM addressed several key issues during its week of deliberations, including the preparation of Rules and Procedures to guide the Commission, the review of a draft legal framework for establishing the Secretariat, and coordination of the major regional and national projects in the basin.

Technical advisors from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (supported by USAID) provided training and facilitation in conflict management in

a two day workshop prior to the meeting. The training was applied to build consensus around a revised version of the OKACOM Rules and Procedures document designed to guide Commission operations. As a result of this workshop, the full Commission approved the Rules and Procedures in its 11th meeting.



A pond in Menongue, Angola.
Southern Angolan waters feed the Okavango Delta.

OKACOM asked the IRBM project, through the interim secretariat, to continue collaborating with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Government of Botswana to ensure an effective and timely start up of the Secretariat in Maun, scheduled for later this year. For further information about the IRBM project, contact Keith Kline at kkline@usaid.gov.

The Regional Environmental Advisor Corner

Biotechnology in Southern Africa. Over the past decades, several food crops and animals have been modified for greater commercial value, higher yield, improved nutrition, or resistance to pests and diseases. Biotechnology has become perhaps the most important instrument for boosting food security for Africa's growing population.

The RCSA and USAID/South Africa are supporting the Southern Africa Biotechnology Program (SABP) to develop partnerships that integrate biotechnology research with marketable agricultural products and promote private-public sector partnerships. SABP works with Michigan State University (MSU) and the Centre International d'Agriculture Tropicale (CIAT), as well as a network of regional research and university partners in South Africa, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. SABP partners are working to identify and modify genes to develop more nutritious cassava genotypes.

In Malawi, SABP is increasing the production of cassava production, and improving processing and marketing techniques. SABP is field testing new cassava varieties in South Africa. In Zambia and Mozambique, SABP is conducting research to identify viruses that affect cassava production.

Biotechnology Workshops. In November, RCSA supported two major workshops gathering over 100 biotechnology professionals from Southern Africa's universities and research centers to discuss processes for carrying out confined field trials on cassava in Southern Africa. The 3-day workshop "Fourth USAID-African Partners in Biotechnology Conference" focused on product development. The second workshop, attended by over 60 participants from 16 countries in Africa, focused on food safety and environmental biosafety issues, with special emphasis on crops and foods derived from GMOs (genetically modified organisms).

The RCSA Regional Environmental Advisor is [Camilien Saint-Cyr](#).

SOUTHERN AFRICA GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS HUB



USAID TRADE HUB HAPPENINGS

Exporting Melons. Harvesting began in late December in Botswana of high quality melons for the export market. The USAID Trade Hub, in collaboration with the Botswana Ministry of Agriculture and the Botswana Horticulture Council, supported farm trials of seedless watermelons and new varieties of cantaloupe and honeydew melons. Samples will be sent to fresh-cut fruit processors, who export fruit mixes to European and South African supermarkets. Based on the outcome of this trial, production will begin during Botswana's 2006 winter growing season (April through November), when Botswana has a seasonal climatic advantage over South Africa.



RCSA Deputy Director Anthony Vodraska and Botswana Member of Parliament Olebile Gaborone at one of the melon test sites

Six commercial and emergent farmers are participating in the trials. Participating farmers were selected because of their farming skill and ability to supply clean irrigation water. The seed varieties used are adapted to arid conditions and to match the requirements of southern African

supermarkets and processors. Total production will be 80 to 100 tons, of which 30% will be used as sample materials for evaluation and panel tests by South African supermarkets and fruit processors.

Botswana Beef. On November 1st, the USAID Trade Hub hosted the Cattle Production and Marketing Policy Conference, organized by the Botswana Cattle Producers Association (BCPA). The BCPA invited senior policy makers to discuss a new strategy to make the sector more competitive and attract investment to build capacity. Botswana is renowned for its high quality beef, which is an important export product. The meeting was attended by both public and private organizations, including representatives from the Botswana Meat Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture. U.S. Ambassador to Botswana, Katherine Canavan, provided the keynote address.



Mozambican farmers learning new grafting technique for litchis

Mozambique Litchis. In collaboration with a South Africa marketing firm, USAID Trade Hub provided technical assistance to smallholder litchi growers in the Chimoio region of Manica Province in Mozambique. Assistance was provided to improve grafting techniques and post-harvest handling. This will allow farmers to increase production of litchi fruit and attract more commercial marketing opportunities.

IN FOCUS

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The New Year is also bringing about change for yours truly. I am retiring from USAID imminently, but hope to remain involved with economic and social development, particularly in Africa where I have spent 25 years. It was 40 years ago that I first went to Africa, to the then pearl of West Africa, Sierra Leone, as a Peace Corps volunteer under Sargent Shriver's administration. I have been focused on Africa all but five of these 40 years.

I was excited in 1966 about Africa's future and I remain excited today. Like many observers, I believe that the media generally focus on negative news out of Africa and that warps the world view of the continent. The truth is that there has been tremendous progress in the decades since the former colonies gained their independence – in spite of cold war intrigue, kleptomania, and bad governance that has plagued some of them. Yet there remains much to do and I sincerely hope that we will assist development efforts in a rational manner without massive giveaways except to people who cannot help themselves. The future of Africa's 54 nations will surely affect our own. Economic growth is the key.

AROUND THE REGION

Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete was sworn in December 21st as **Tanzania's** fourth president...**Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania** and **Zambia** were among the 37 countries certified in December as AGOA eligible for the coming year. AGOA (African Growth and Opportunity Act) creates new trade and economic opportunities for African countries. Each year, AGOA-eligible countries are certified as making continued progress toward a market-based economy, rule of law, free trade and economic policies that will reduce poverty...**Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania** and **Zambia** are among the 19 countries that will receive 100% debt relief under the International Monetary Fund Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative...**Namibia** received a sovereign credit rating of BBB-. It is the third sub-Saharan African country to obtain an investment grade rating...The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stated that **Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland** and **Zimbabwe** face overall food shortages. FAO reports that the **Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Tanzania** and **Zambia** suffer from severe localized food insecurity.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

During the 4th quarter, the RCSA bid farewell to **Keboitse Machangana** and **Ikwo Ekpo**. Keboitse led the RCSA's democracy and governance program; Ikwo was the RCSA HIV/AIDS mitigation specialist...The Regional Program Implementation Office also bid farewell to **Calamity Kaleba** and **Tshegofatso Gower**.